1: Gorer J-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

and women wear a curved sickle, thrust without a sheath into the sash round their waist at the back; but this instrument is of less general use than the men's knives, and women are frequently forced to borrow knives from men who are near them.

Far and away the most important single material for the Lepchas is the bamboo, or rather the numerous varieties of different bamboos that they grow and recognise. In the house bamboo is used for the floor, ceiling, walls and balcony; out of it water-carriers, and on occasion water conduits are made. The drinking vessels—*patyoot*—are made from ten-inch sections of old and hollow bamboo; each *patyoot* is cut off just below a joint, where the natural growth forms a bottom for the vessel. The principal beverage drunk from these *patyoot* is *chi*, a sort of beer which is formed by pouring boiling water on fermented grain; this is drunk through a 'straw'—*pa-hip*—which consists of a section of a small-growing bamboo with the pith at the end loosened so as to form a rude filter. Pins and brooches are made from bamboo; bows and arrows, the Lepcha's only hunting weapons, quivers and scabbards, all are made of different sorts of bamboo; and the catalogue could be continued almost endlessly. Finally the young bamboo shoots are good to eat, and the leaves are fed to temporarily restrained domestic animals, such as oxen when they are needed for ploughing.

The Lepchas of Zongu do not know how to make pottery. Plates are usually replaced by big leaves, but there are a certain number of rudely carved wooden plates which are used on ceremonious occasions, and a few metal and china dishes and containers which have been got by trading from Tibetans or bought in exchange for cardamum.

The Lepchas weave strong and regular mats and baskets out of the bark of bamboo and various reeds, which they employ for a variety of purposes. This weaving is ideally men's work, as the weaving of thread is women's, but a certain number of women are as good mat-makers as any of the men, and there is felt to be no disgrace in employing articles made by women. During the summer months a mat called *tuk* is worn over the head as a protection against sun and rain; it is made of a double layer of finely woven bamboo filled with big leaves and has a rope in the centre to fasten it round the neck; it measures about three feet by four. Although the making of this article is considered to be specifically man's work, the best *tuk* in the village were said to be made by a woman, the mother of Gongyop.

1: Gorer J-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

252 262 264 [272] cooking stones; it makes a greenish cake, or 'bread' as the Lepchas call it, of an astonishingly leathery consistency. On ordinary days, besides snacks, the Lepchas eat two meals; the bigger one in the morning, drunk with tea, Tibetan fashion, before going to work; and a second meal in the evenings with *chi* to accompany it.

273 Millet is grown exclusively for fermenting for *chi* and is never eaten by human beings; if there is no millet any other grain will be fermented in the same way; if there is no grain bootleg liquor is made out of the pith of different tree-ferns, which is pounded and buried. The making of this alcohol from forest produce is formally forbidden but is done almost continuously; it is very strong and potentially poisonous, and has a strong purgative effect. This alcohol is under the protection of a supernatural called Manoong *moong* and when the fermented pith is pounded on a piece of wood offerings of sticks placed on the press are made to the supernatural, who will make the drink stronger or weaker according to the size of his offerings.

[846] *Chi* can be prepared in about nine days, but it is stronger and more appreciated if it is left to ferment longer. Specially strong *chi* is always prepared against a woman's lying-in and is given to her as a strengthening food for a month after delivery. To prepare *chi* the grain is first trodden to separate it from the husks and then put in a basket and well washed in a stream. A copper [415] vessel is also well washed and the grain put in it; it is then covered with cold water and boiled until all the water is absorbed, being stirred all the time with a wooden spoon. To make sure that all the water is absorbed the wooden spoon is stuck down to the bottom of the pot; if it comes up dripping further cooking is necessary. When it has cooked sufficiently the pot is upset on to a bamboo mat; after an hour it is removed and the cooked grain is spread all over the mat. Then a big wicker basket is well lined with bracken; the grain is mixed with powdered yeast and put into the basket which is covered with more bracken and a tightly tied cloth. The basket is then set in a corner, well away from the fire, for two or three days, at the end of which time the smell of fermentation becomes noticeable. Then special big leaves are fetched from the forest and a new basket is lined with them and the grain is transferred to the new basket, which is well tied up and set over the fire on the drying ledge. It is fit to drink after three days but it is better kept longer; it becomes undrinkable after four months.

1: Gorer J-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

273 Nowadays nearly everybody buys yeast cakes in the bazaars, where they are sold very cheaply, but the old method of making the yeast is still known and employed by some of the older women. For five days before making the yeast the maker must not eat high meat or drink sour *chi* or the yeast will go bad; and it is thought that these prohibitions are the chief cause for people now buying it. The native yeast had six ingredients: the roots of two trees [624] which I could not identify, and the leaves of a gaultheria ground to powder mixed with powdered chilli and ginger and powdered millet and water. The whole is made into a cake and left to dry for three days.

All *chi* is not uniformly good; its goodness depends on the proportion of yeast and its proper distribution and the care taken in the arrangement of the basket. Some houses are noted for their consistently good or bad *chi*, the best being obtained from the Mandal's and Tafoor's and the worst at Jiroong's and, surprisingly enough, Datoop's. This is peculiar because both Mr. and Mrs. Datoop are very fond of *chi* and Mrs. Datoop is in all other respects the most obviously competent woman in the village. To prepare *chi* for drinking all that is necessary is to put the fermented grain into a bamboo container, *patyoot*, and upset boiling, or nearly boiling, water on to it; the liquid is drunk through [415] a specially narrow bamboo called *pahip*, which has one end cut so as to make a sort of filter to prevent the grains being sucked in at the same time as the liquid. The drink is quite pleasant, somewhat sweet and insidious; at a guess I should place the alcohol content at about the same as a strong beer or a light red wine. The *patyoot* is refilled with water at least three times and consequently the drink gets weaker as more is drunk. Until the water [431] is poured on the *chi* it is perfectly easy to handle and transport, and the presents of *chi* which take place on almost all formal occasions consist of a packet of the fermented grain wrapped in a cloth or held in a basket. Strained *chi*, which is the fermented grain given a single sousing of water and then drained in a wicker bag, is a delicacy and is very considerably stronger than the *chi* drunk through the straw. The Lepchas are also fond of *arak*, commercially distilled liquor, and usually buy it when they go to a place where it is obtainable.

Except in the poorest households, or on those occasions when one lot of *chi* has been exhausted and the next is not yet ready, adult Lepchas drink at least one *patyoot* of *chi* daily: if they did

1: Gorer J-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

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MONASTERY FEAST

[facing p. 256]

1: Gorer J-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

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[415]

ONGDEN'S WEDDING

Above : Ongden in a clean dress. Behind him old Adér.

Below : The feast.

[facing p. 336]

1: Gorer J-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

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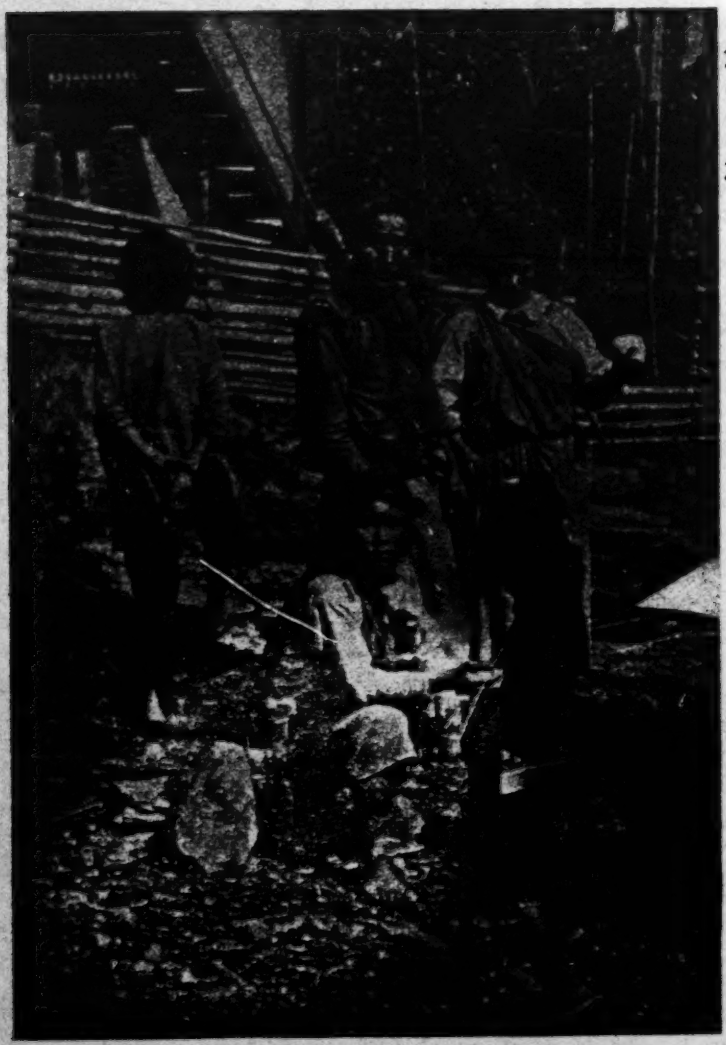

MR. AND MRS. JIROONG. MRS. JIROONG IS SPINNING. SHE IS WEARING TIBETAN DRESS AND HER HUSBAND'S HAT. SEATED IN FRONT IS DADOOL SOAKING A CUT FOOT. ATYOOK TURNS HIS BACK

[facing p. 424]

1: Gorer J-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

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GONGYOP DEDICATES MRS. CHANO TO THE MUN GOD

Above : Valuables and other objects on a 'plate' on an open-air altar.

Below : Gongyop offers to the gods and devils the cooked intestines of the sacrificial ox with rice. His wife is beside him.

[facing p. 476]

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

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The *Cherim* ceremony. The *Mun* Pom-Ri divining by means of an egg.

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The rough altar, with the offering to Kinchinjunga in position.

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Kahlyeu and the *Mun* imploring the spirits to accept the offering.

[facing p. 4]

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

000 "The Congress, which has refused office in six provinces where the party is in a position to form Ministries, observed a *hartal* to mark the inauguration of autonomy in the provinces.

"The *hartal* was observed in Calcutta by the closing of Hindu shops. A small minority of Moslem-owned shops were also closed.

"Public services continued as usual, but schools and offices under the control of the Calcutta Corporation were closed. No disturbances have been reported."

* * * * *

782 At almost the very moment when the Governor of Bengal
787 was administering the oath to his newly-appointed Ministers,
789 an old Lepcha woman was squatting on the ground in a remote valley in Sikkim, with an egg pressed against her forehead. This was the day of the *Cherim* ceremony, which is observed all over Sikkim twice in every year: once now, and again at the beginning of the winter. Its purpose is to find out what sickness is likely to trouble the village during the next few months and, since the Lepchas like to get as much benefit as possible out of any one celebration, also to keep
[887] away hail. Kahlyeu, a gentle old man of nearly eighty, had previously made a rough altar of the branches of trees. It
[133] faced up the valley in full sight of Kinchinjunga, the summit
[487] of which is only twenty miles away as the crow flies, but for poor toiling man a journey of many painful days along the
[137] roughest of paths, and through thick rhododendron forest, to
787 the lower slopes alone. On his roughly constructed altar
789 Kahlyeu now put a large brass tray in which were seven
778 cones of butter, four eggs (some said it should have been
782 three), one rupee, three small butter-lamps and a Tibetan
[285 ceremonial scarf. The tray was placed on top of a plaited
415] bamboo winnowing-tray, on which was spread a piece of red cotton cloth. All this was an offering to the spirits who dwell
[776] in the mountain, which the local people know only as Konchen. Before the eggs were placed in position Pom-ri, the old woman who was making the offering, placed each in

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

782 turn to her forehead and said a short prayer. She told us
787 afterwards that by this means she could ascertain what devils
789 of sickness were likely to trouble the village (on this occasion
778 it was coughs and cold); and by offering them the grain and other things ensure that their visitations should at least cause no permanent harm.

787 As soon as the eggs were placed in position on the tray a
789 bowl of burning juniper twigs was placed on the ground,
782 just to the right of the altar. This was to drive the clouds away from the top of the mountain in order that the spirits might see what was being offered them. Pom-ri now started to chant in a cracked and mumbling voice. In her right hand
[415] she held a small drinking bowl, round the rim of which butter had been smeared. A woman helper ladled strained spirit into the bowl from time to time from a large vessel which stood on the ground beside her; and on the other side of Pom-ri stood Kahlyeu, his cap, filled with grain, in one hand. From time to time Pom-ri threw the contents of her bowl towards the mountain, when it was at once refilled by her assistant; and as she did this the old man threw out a handful of grain from his cap. He, too, chanted, and at times the pair seemed to be moaning in unison. But they were both so old, and their voices so cracked and low that it was impossible to catch their words. I did, however, frequently hear the word Konchen at the moment when the libations were being offered. This went on for about twenty minutes, and then the pair turned about and faced down the valley, chanting and making offering as before.

Having propitiated the spirits of Konchen they had now turned their attention to such evils as come from the direction of the plains; on this particular occasion it was hail. In the meantime a goat had been slaughtered in the bushes behind.
[231] This was done by thrusting a short pointed bamboo stake into its heart, the usual method of killing small domestic animals. At the place where it was killed a fire was lighted and the carcass lightly singed. After this the meat, including the animal's head, the liver (on a stake), and the

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

from below the top would also revolve; and if one happened to be having a bath at the same time the effect was rather startling until we grew accustomed to expect it. A flange projected from the rim of the drum, and this struck a bell at every turn, thus enabling the worshipper to keep a count, for it would be unwise to finish with an inauspicious number. It had a tinkling sound like the bell in a village shop; and I had only to hear it to be immediately transported to the English countryside.

The upper storey was reached by an outside staircase and contained three rooms. The largest was more or less identical with the main hall below, and also contained an altar, complete with images and books. There were also several fearsome-looking masks, said to represent Lord Konchen, which were used for dances. This room was used as a general store-room: in one corner were a number of printing blocks and apparatus for making paper, also odds and ends of ceremonial equipment, coloured umbrellas, peacocks' feathers, and such-like. Some of the pillars were roughly carved, and decorated with crudely coloured dragon designs. The ceiling was unplastered, and on the beams above a number of immense copper vessels and cooking pots were stored. This was our bedroom, and it always reminded me of the backstage of a theatre set for a Christmas pantomime. It would never have surprised me to see a *Corps de Ballet* come tripping into the room; and when the light was put out the last thing one saw, before dropping off to sleep, was the gilded face of the large central Buddha faintly gleaming in the light of the flickering wick. In the morning we would usually awake to the pattering sound of a bare-footed novice, whose duty it was to refill the seven altar-bowls with water.

There was another small room, little bigger than a cell, which was used by certain monks for the purpose of private meditation. It was only about nine feet square, and its solitary window was heavily swathed in sacking, so as to exclude every particle of light. From time to time one

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

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Pong Ring, the monastery verger.

Grandmother, with the evening's supply of drinks.

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[facing p. 22]

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

olden days our fathers got their food from the forest; but times change; forest regulations were framed against us, and we had to buy our food. When friends called we could not refrain from sharing what we had with them, with the result that our year's store got consumed before the new crop was ready, and we had to go to the mahajan's shop and take it from him at an exorbitant rate of interest; and before we realised it we had become his slaves for life. There were no government rules against disposing of our land to others. We Lepchas were poor and we had to sell to the more thrifty Nepalese at a ridiculously low price.'

"That is how much of the Lepchas' land was acquired by Nepalese. Rules preventing the transfer to Nepalese except by the personal ruling of the Deputy Commissioner have largely stopped this evil. The Lepchas, however, have learned much from the Nepalese as to the tillage of the land, and many of them are now quite as good farmers as their instructors.

"Another incident occurs to me from the 'Young Men's' meetings on much the same subject. The point I would give is on the reasons why the Nepalese are still, as then, more thrifty than the Lepchas. One young man said: 'Have you ever seen the different sizes of the cooking vessels used by the Lepchas and the Nepalese on a journey? The Lepcha carries one which could cook for a family and will share with any fellow-traveller in need: the Nepali carried a little pot just sufficient for his own use; and even if his father were beside him he would not ask him to take a little.'

"This was doubtless an exaggeration; but speaking generally it does reveal an undoubted difference between the two peoples.

"Another fruitful cause of poverty among the Lepchas is their sacrifice of cattle and fowls on the advice of their priests in times of illness. Until that is stopped by the deliverance from the fear of evil spirits the Lepchas will remain poor. I have known it in times of prolonged and frequent illness in a family that every animal they have was

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[30]

Pemba, the son of Datoop.

His wife; and on the left a cousin.

[21]

[415]

Conversation piece.

[FACING p. 96]

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

159 strange woman came to see his mother. She was carrying
● [415] some water in a long bamboo, which she put down against
the fence. She talked a lot to Karma's mother and asked her
[597] if she could adopt him. At first she would not agree; but later
on she said that he could go provided he went of his own free
will. The strange woman then called him aside: "I will take
you home with me;" she said, "at my home we have lots of
rice and meat; and if you come and live with me I will give
them to you. Come, let us go! After you have eaten you can
then come back to your mother." Karma did not like the
idea of leaving home, but the thought of food was more than
he could resist. He went away with his adopting mother; but
when they reached home she gave him only a plate of rice;
and no meat. He now discovered that he was to live with this
new strange woman; and when he told her that he wanted to
go back to his mother she tried to frighten him by saying that
if he did so he would certainly meet Sangrong Mung, which
would eat him up.

[157] Now he grew bigger and bigger. Once he dreamt that he
86 was urinating; he was doing it in a special way, only a very
159 little at a time. In the morning when he awoke he found that
his bed was wet; even his legs were damp. His adopting
mother threw the wet sheet at his head and also beat him;
then she rubbed his body with the dirty wet cloth.

In the day-time his adopting parents generally went to work in the fields and he was left alone in the house. Sometimes he would steal the eggs. He never ate them, but used to break them and then fry them on hot stones. One day his parents found the mess and beat him. Whenever he thought he had done anything which would bring him a beating he would run away and hide in the forest and not return before nightfall. Often he was afraid to enter the house and would spend the whole night lying in the filth beneath it. But his parents soon got to know about this; and whenever they found anything wrong, without saying anything about it, they would come and beat him straight away. One day he was playing beside his adopting father, who was sitting on

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

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On the left the oldest man in Lingtem, who claims to be over ninety, with Chötembu's wife.

[778]

The *Hlaribu*, or local artist-Lama. The objects on the left are small revolving prayer-drums.

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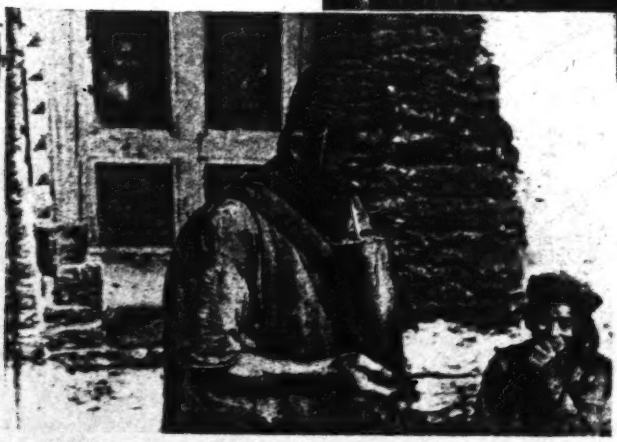

The method of drinking *chi*. The special hat which the man is wearing is made of plaited bamboo, and is only worn when hunting. It is not often seen nowadays.

[facing p. 106]

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

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The Mun Gongyop making an offering. He is assisted by his wife, who squats on the right. The object in the saucepan is a bamboo strainer, out of which she is ladling *chi* to refill the cup which Gongyop is holding.

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Tafoor "prescribing" for Chano's wife. Chano, on the left, appears to be somewhat doubtful of the issue; or perhaps he is wondering whether he can afford the necessary "treatment."

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A *Mung-Li*, or demon's house, on the edge of a cardamom field.

[facing p. 146]

751 The *Za-Sung* is a strip of paper wrapped round a piece of
777 bamboo and covered with a coating of lac, on which are impressed nine zeros representing eyes. This charm is usually worn on a string round the neck.

[415] The *Tshon-Sung*, or "weapon-warder," is always worn in a *Ka-Wo*, or metal charm box. This is usually of plain silver or copper, but is sometimes decorated with gold filigree work.
[523] In this box are usually kept the most precious relics and religious heirlooms of the family. These usually consist of such things as the hairs of some holy Lama, his bones, teeth, or a portion of his clothing. Nail-parings also are in much demand. These things are considered so efficacious in affording protection against weapons that Tibetans and Bhutanese are often willing to pay very high prices for them, and will not part with them for any consideration unless they believe that they are haunted or have become attended by some evil spirit which is likely to cause their owner sickness.

The *Palkyet-Sung*, or amulet of universal purpose, is considered to be particularly efficacious in averting the evil influences of physical mesmerism, disagreement between married couples, and in maintaining harmony between them.

823 Gold and platinum are believed to be proof against all
783 forms of pollution, but it is not often that such expensive materials can be afforded. Copper comes next in order of merit, and is preferred to silver as being less liable to pollution. Silver boxes must be sanctified by sprinkling holy water over them every morning and fumigating them with incense; but this is unnecessary with boxes of any other metal.

844 For cases of childbirth, and also for various diseases of the
751 nervous system, there are charms written on a thin strip of paper with Chinese ink. These are rolled into a pill, coated with butter, and given to the patient to swallow. In cases of difficult labour they are tied to the hair of the mother, on the crown of her head, in the belief that this expedites delivery of

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

796 The whole offering was again sprinkled with holy water, and Gongyop continued his incantations.

He told the gods and demons that the *Rum* was now being given them; they must be satisfied and go away without [781] troubling the people. None of the spectators, of whom about forty were present, displayed any interest in the proceedings; but one old man came and sat by Gongyop for a time and seemed to be chanting with him word for word. Gongyop [787] later told me that when he held the eggs to his forehead he thought he saw what looked like a fairly straight road. This meant illness, but nothing very serious: probably a mild epidemic of stomach-ache would follow.

While Gongyop was carrying out his part of the ceremony a long pole, supported on several uprights, had been erected alongside the *Rum*. This is called *Tumsheung-Pating*. From the cross-piece several dozen miniature packets were suspended: most contained various kinds of grain; but there [824 387] were also some heads of barley, sticks of majito (a root used for dyeing), bits of wool and cotton; small bits of everything, in fact, that people use in their daily life. Most of these offerings, which had been contributed by the whole of the village, were tied into little banana-leaf packets; others were in miniature plaited baskets. This was said to be a general offering to the demons; but there was no ceremony in connection with it. An identical *Tumsheung-Pating* was constructed to one side of the other altar. This was for the Lord Konchen, the other being for the devils who rule in the plains.

We have already seen that the main altar was built facing up the valley towards Kinchinjunga. Old Kahlyeu now [415] brought a small brass tray, on which he arranged seven heaps of parched rice (again contributed by all the village), four eggs, one silver rupee, and three small lamps. Later on, three cones of butter were placed on top of the rice. There was some doubt as to the correct number of eggs required; [801] some said three, others five; but old Pom-Ri, the Mun who was now to officiate, was sure that four was right. The whole

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

it is usual to call in some experienced old man to fasten such things up. None of the things had been removed from the house while the roof was being repaired. It is said that a new roof lasts for about seven years, after which it must be completely renewed. No nails are used in the construction of houses, all woodwork being mortised and tied where necessary with canes. Even large buildings like the monastery are constructed entirely without nails.

* * * * *

There is no furniture in Lepcha houses; beds, tables (except the low Tibetan variety), and chairs being unknown. The kitchen stove is merely a platform of earth, on which some half-dozen large stones are placed as supports for the cooking pots. These are generally of copper or brass, and I never once saw any kind of earthenware vessel and was told they were never used. Stores of maize and millet hang from the rafters, and other grains are kept in baskets stacked against the walls. The family bedding may generally be seen draped across these baskets during the day-time; and unwanted clothing is suspended from bamboo slivers inserted in cracks in the walls. I occasionally noticed that the walls had been papered with old newspapers. One such was plastered with years-old copies of the *Evening News*, one of which advertised the film of "Bengal Lancer"; but how these ever reached Lingtem is beyond my comprehension. Our own cast-off papers were always in much demand, one man in particular asking constantly for pictures of wars. He seemed to think that war was a fine experience, and talked of little else, although of course he had never seen one. Anyhow, the walls of his cottage are no longer bare: and for the rest of his life he can sit in peace while gazing at pictures of Franco's atrocities. I hope sincerely that this is the nearest to war he will get.

Water is brought in long hollow bamboos and stored in copper pots, of the type that form part of the marriage gifts. These do not hold more than a couple of gallons, and are

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

also used for cooking rice. It is sometimes the custom to pickle corpses when, for instance, it is desired to postpone burial until some auspicious day. Large copper vessels, as big as a barrel, are used for this purpose; in Lingtem there were only two. These belonged to the Mandal, who kindly lent us one to store our water! It was near to the time of departure, however, before I realised their proper function. The Mandal assured us that, in point of fact, no corpse had ever been stored in our particular pot; but I feel sure that he thought we were being unduly squeamish. Perhaps we were.

Both rooms of a house are normally used for sleeping, but there is some sort of idea that if the inner room contains an altar (which is not always the case) it should be slept in only by Lamas: this rule, however, like many others, seems to be disregarded. Only the outer clothing is removed at night, and the people sleep on the floor. There is little attempt at privacy; nor indeed would this be possible where as many as fifteen people, as was the case in Tafoor's house for instance, have to be accommodated in two small rooms. This is perhaps an extreme instance; but it is unusual, except in the case of an elderly childless couple, to find less than four or five people occupying one room.

Men wear a pair of loosely-cut cotton shorts and a cotton shirt of Tibetan pattern. The shorts are made unnecessarily large in the waist, the surplus being folded over and tucked in in order to keep them up. Both these articles are made from machine-made material, and are usually obtained (at exorbitant prices) from Hindu shopkeepers in Mangen. On top of them they generally wear the Lepcha *dum-dyum*, an attractive home-spun garment woven from imported white cotton with a typical striped design in red, blue, and yellow. This is no longer much made in Lingtem, and is usually obtained from some other Lepcha village. The Lingtem people seem to think they are better employed in tending their crops, and that it is really cheaper to buy their cloth rather than have the women make it at home. It seems a pity. The *dum-dyum* is not a made-up garment

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[531
341]

Happy family.

[285]

Lepcha girl.

[482
854]

Tafoor's two daughters.

[301
415]

Baby, having overeaten at luncheon.

[facing p.210]

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

142
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Karma.

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Culture contact. A Lepcha youth on return from two years in Gangtok. The object against the right doorpost is a bamboo water-container.

[facing p.242]

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

585 carry the necessary loads, so that the whole party forms quite an imposing gathering. It takes with it one complete pig's carcass, a full load of chi-millet and sixteen pounds of rice, half of which should be parched.

When the procession arrives within about half a mile of the bridegroom's home two boys are sent out to meet it. They take with them two bamboos of *chi*. One of these is given to the *Rum fat-bo*, and the other to the *Aku*. They first offer a little to the gods, after which the rest is distributed and consumed on the spot. In the meantime the two boys run back as hard as they can go and give warning that the procession is approaching.

[343 A small shed, known as *Gor shun*, has been previously
● 415] constructed outside the house and a number of bamboo
273] containers filled with *chi* are now placed ready inside it. The bridal party is escorted straight to the *Gor shun*, where it immediately consumes the *chi* without further ceremony; the idea being to make all concerned a little intoxicated as quickly as possible, in order to make the party go with a swing. A light meal is now served, and a special pot of ceremonial unstrained *chi*, known as *Chi-lok*, is offered. This is covered with a cloth, and after being ceremonially offered is taken away again inside the house. It is not drunk and is used for libations to the gods.

As soon as the party has rested a little it is escorted inside the house, where the guests, usually the whole of the village, have already gathered and are probably no longer sober.
[788] Each member of the party prostrates himself three times in front of the altar; after which all sit down on the floor, ranging themselves in a line along one wall, the bridegroom's attendants being seated along the opposite wall.

While a Mun is making a sacrifice to the family gods and demons of the girl's family in one room, the ceremony of handing the bride over takes place in another. For this purpose the respective *Pi-bos* stand up facing one another in front of the altar, but everyone else remains seated on the floor.

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

291
142

Ongden, a bridegroom of fifty.

342
571
415
351
291
285
417
481

Ongden's new wife (in the bottom left-hand corner, wearing a white bodice) arriving at his house for the wedding. Her attendants are just about to enter the house.

[facing p. 258]

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

796
291
[778]

Lamas preparing the *tormas* which will later be offered to Kinchinjunga.

533
415
352

Lamas at worship. The duty of the novice is to beat the large drum, in front of which he is sitting. Note the bamboo container of *chi* by the side of each Lama.

[778
346]

At the conclusion of the service the offering is brought out and exhibited to Kinchinjunga.

[FACING p. 274]

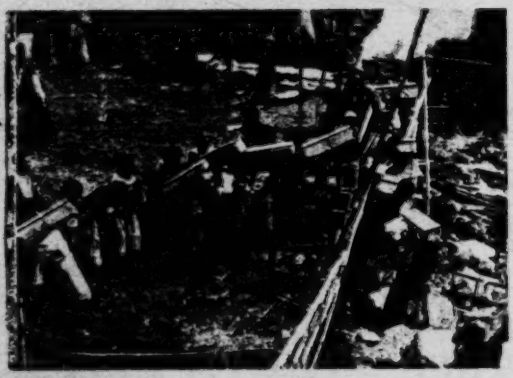
2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

796

The *Boom Kor* ceremony. The procession about to leave Lingtem monastery.

346
415
855

779
482



The sacred books starting off on their journey round the district. Each volume is carried by a woman.

778

Small image of Guru Rimpoche, over which a bell-shaped "umbrella" is held, and pot of holy water being carried in the procession.

[Facing p. 290]

114 323 /896/ In this connection, to be sure, I must supplement the assertion concerning the pottery of the Lepcha which is found in G. Gorer's Himalayan Village (London, 1938), p. 67. As is stated in the above work, the generation of Lepchas living today in the reservation of Zongu has no knowledge of the art of pottery. Consequently copper, brass and porcelain pots of Nepalese, Chinese or even Western origin are used in their households; this statement corresponds to the observations I made among some of the Lepchas living outside the reservation. In addition, however, I was also able to find out that only two generations ago the art of pottery was practiced by a few men experienced in this trade, who on their part supplied the other [437] tribe members with the products of their work by way of barter. Their activity, to be sure, seems to have been limited to the manufacture of a type of vessel which was formerly used among the Lepchas. [415] These vessels called Tang ling fyŭ tyók generally had no handle and a short neck, and were rounded out most in the bottom third; at their broadest point they were about 30 centimeters in diameter. They were made of clay without the aid of a potter's wheel and were then baked. A few of these vessels are reputedly in use in a few remote places in Sikkim.

172 764 Also, the idea that the potsherds might come from urns or grave goods should not be completely disregarded. Should this assumption prove to be correct, then it is possible that the former settlers were not Lepchas, for insofar as I have been able to ascertain on the basis of my investigations of the old burial practices of the Lepchas, cremation of the dead and disposal of the ashes in urns or the practice of placing jugs containing food in the grave was not customary among the Lepchas. (9)

9. Cf. R. Nebesky de Wojkowitz, "Ancient funeral ceremonies of the Lepchas," Eastern Anthropologist (Lucknow), 5, (1951).

4. Supplement

172 Only a short time after this article had gone to press, I succeeded in obtaining a few of the potsherds discovered in the region of Daramdin. In the majority of cases these were small fragments with edges that had already been greatly worn down. They consisted of clay shot through with mica. They vary according to the

7: Hooker D-5 (1849-1851) 1854
AK5 Lepcha AK5

bowstring; and a little pouch, containing aconite poison and a few common implements, is suspended to his girdle. A hat he seldom wears, and when he does, it is often extravagantly broad and flat-brimmed, with a small hemispherical crown. It is made of leaves of *Scitamineæ*, between two thin plates of bamboo-work, clumsy and heavy; this is generally used in the rainy weather, while in the dry a conical one is worn, also of platted slips of bamboo, with broad flakes of talc between the layers, and a peacock's feather at the side. The umbrella consists of a large hood, much like the ancient boat called a coracle, which being placed over the head reaches to the thighs behind. It is made of platted bamboo, enclosing broad leaves of *Phrynium*. A group of Lepchas with these on, running along in the pelting rain, are very droll figures; they look like snails with their shells on their backs. All the Lepchas are fond of ornaments, wearing silver hoops in their ears, necklaces made of cornelian, amber, and turquoise, brought from Tibet, and pearls and corals from the south, with curious silver and golden charm-boxes or amulets attached to their necks or arms. These are of Tibetan workmanship, and often of great value: they contain little idols, charms and written prayers, or the bones, hair, or nail-parings of a Lama: some are of great beauty, and highly ornamented. In these decorations, and in their hair, they take some pride, the ladies frequently dressing the latter for the gentlemen: thus one may often see, the last thing at night, a damsel of discreet port, demurely go behind a young man, unplait his pig-tail, teaze the hair, thin it of some of its lively inmates, braid it up for him, and retire. The women always wear two braided pig-tails, and it is by this they are most readily distinguished from their effeminate-looking partners, who wear only one.

7: Hooker D-5 (1849-1851) 1854
AK5 Lepcha AK5

partners, who wear only one.* When in full dress, the woman's costume is extremely ornamental and picturesque; besides the shirt and petticoat she wears a small sleeveless woollen cloak, of gay pattern, usually covered with crosses, and fastened in front by a girdle of silver chains. Her neck is loaded with silver chains, amber necklaces, &c., and her head adorned with a coronet of scarlet cloth, studded with seed-pearls, jewels, glass beads, &c. The common dress is a long robe of indi, a cloth of coarse silk, spun from the cocoon of a large caterpillar that is found wild at the foot of the hills, and is also cultivated: it feeds on many different leaves, Sal (*Shorea*), castor-oil, &c.

In diet, they are gross feeders; † rice, however, forming their chief sustenance; it is grown without irrigation, and produces a large, flat, coarse grain, which becomes gelatinous, and often pink, when cooked. Pork is a staple dish: and they also eat elephant, and all kinds of animal food. When travelling, they live on whatever they can find, whether animal or vegetable. Fern-tops, roots of *Scitamineæ*, and their flower-buds, various leaves (it is difficult to say what not), and fungi, are chopped up, fried with a little oil, and eaten. Their cooking is coarse and dirty. Salt is costly, but prized; pawn (Betel pepper) is never eaten. Tobacco they are too poor to buy, and too indolent to grow and cure. Spices, oil, &c. are relished.

They drink out of little wooden cups, turned from knots of maple, or other woods; these are very curious on several accounts; they are very pretty, often polished, and mounted with silver. Some are supposed to be antidotes against

* Ermann (Travels in Siberia, ii. p. 204) mentions the Buraet women as wearing two tails, and fillets with jewels, and the men as having one queue only.

† Dr. Campbell's definition of the Lepcha's *Flora cibaria*, is, that he eats, or must have eaten, everything soft enough to chew; for, as he knows whatever is poisonous, he must have tried all; his knowledge being wholly empirical.

7: Hooker D-5 (1849-1851) 1854
AK5 Lepcha AK5

Some ¼ are supposed to be antidotes against
poison, and hence fetch an enormous price; they are of a [752] 415 ●
peculiar wood, rarer and paler-coloured. I have paid a [435]
guinea for one such, hardly different from the common
sort, which cost but 4*d.* or 6*d.* MM. Huc and Gabet
graphically allude to this circumstance, when wishing to
purchase cups at Lhassa, where their price is higher, as
they are all imported from the Himalaya. The knots from
which they are formed, are produced on the roots of oaks,
maples, and other mountain forest trees, by a parasitical [137]
plant, known to botanists as *Balanophora*.

Their intoxicating drink, which seems more to excite 273
than to debauch the mind, is partially fermented Murwa
grain (*Eleusine Coracana*). Spirits are rather too strong
to be relished raw, and when a glass of wine is given to
one of a party, he sips it, and hands it round to all the
rest. A long bamboo flute, with four or six burnt holes 534
far below the mouth-hole, is the only musical instrument
I have seen in use among them. When travelling, and the 517
fatigues of the day are over, the Lepchas will sit for hours
chatting, telling stories, singing in a monotonous tone,
or blowing this flute. I have often listened with real 533
pleasure to the simple music of this rude instrument; its
low and sweet tones are singularly Æolian, as are the
airs usually played, which fall by octaves: it seems to
harmonize with the solitude of their primæval forests, and
he must have a dull ear who cannot draw from it the
indication of a contented mind, whether he may relish its
soft musical notes or not. Though always equipped for 224
the chase, I fancy the Lepcha is no great sportsman;
there is little to be pursued in this region, and he is not
driven by necessity to follow what there is.

Their marriages are contracted in childhood, and the 583
wife purchased by money, or by service rendered to the 582

¼ [i.e., wooden cups.–Analyst]

8:Nebesky-Wojkowitz--1 E-5 (1950-1953) 1953 AK5 Lepcha AK5

Archiv für Völkerkunde

Volume VIII (1953)

/269/ New Acquisitions from Sikkim and Tibet

by René Nebesky-Wojkowitz

One of the results of my three-years of ethnographic research in the Sikkim-Tibet border region, which I concluded in February, 1953, was the establishment of collections for the Ethnographic Museum /Museum für Völkerkunde/ in Vienna. The majority of the acquired objects are household implements, articles of clothing, ceremonial paraphernalia, and weapons of the Lepchas, the original inhabitants of the Himalaya kingdom of Sikkim. The Lepcha tribe, related in race and language to the Tibetans, has in the course of the last three centuries suffered a progressive narrowing of its living area as a result of the penetration of stronger neighbors. It now numbers only 30,000 members, most of whom live in Sikkim proper. A few scattered Lepcha settlements are still to be found in the vicinity of Darjeeling, Kalimpong, and the Nepalese district of Ilam, and in two valleys of Bhutan. Because of extensive adoption of the customs of Nepalese immigrants, who today form the largest population group of Sikkim, the Lepchas have sacrificed many of their native characteristics. The establishment of this first Lepcha collection therefore was very difficult, for most of the objects formerly used by the Lepchas have been replaced in more recent times by products of Nepalese, Indian, or even European origin.

The household implements included in the collection are made for the most part of bamboo; we find among them variously shaped vessels, spoons and spatulas, a churn-staff /Butterstampfer/, baskets, a grain riddle, strainers, a scale with one balance as well as wooden dishes of varying sizes, which are used for the preparation of millet beer, the alcoholic beverage preferred by the Lepchas. The tribe's art of weaving, which today is practically extinct, is demonstrated by a hand loom containing an almost completed piece of weaving; it shows—just as a second, already completed strip of weaving does

537

En Yz!

Mo-tan-chi Roń kap ńun non bīn	We are the sons of the (one) Mother-flesh jolly Rongs
So-lā-non po-bong yit duk kań sa	We were made along with the *so-la-non* bamboos
	And the *ar-tasm* Bamboo-joints and the small reed (Bamboos [1])
Ar-tasm po-mig duk kań sa po-s'or boń	We the sons of the (one-)Mother-flesh jolly Rongs
Yit duk kung sa Roń kap gum yoń s'u s'u.	Are of equal age (with the Bamboos)!

---

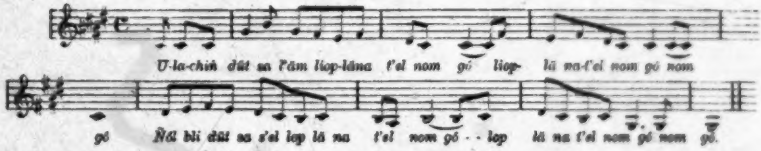
[574] [273] The following three songs are love-laments, the first by a languishing spinster and the others by lovesick swains. The reference in some of them to the "dear sisters" standing behind, relates to the present practice of the girls of the family who stand behind the guests to replenish their bamboo cups of *marua* millet beer [2]).

III.

U-LA-DUŃ DŪT.

A LOVE LAMENT.

[533]


U-la-chiń dūt sa l'ām liop-lāna t'el nom gó liop- lā na-t'el nom gó nom
gó Ńāl bli dūt sa s'el lop lā na t'el nom gó - - lop lā na t'el nom gó nom gó.

U-la duń dūt sa-l'ām liop-lā na-t'el nom gó.	I (am) a maiden [3]), like an unopened bud [4]).
Ńāl-bli dūt sa-s'el " " " "	Like a supple shuttle [5]).
Soń la lyen s'u fak-ruń " " " "	Like a whirling spindle [6]).
Ka-fer ki-run nań nāń liop-lā diń mit nom gó.	I stand a maiden, like a twirling spinning thread.
S'er la tań-kat sa-s'el " " " " "	Like a bright golden tassel.
Mit tań-gum diń-mit nom " " " " "	A maiden I stand (forlorn) behind.
S'ung fo s'el ta-bāl-la liop-lā na-t'el nom gó.	I (am) a maiden like a tender coiled bud.
Tak-mok fo s'ut nań nāń " " " "	Like a sorrowing *S'uń* bird.
Sīk la ma run na mo " " " "	Like a loudly lamenting Takmok bird.
Loń la ma run na mo " " " "	I feel very sad!

IV.

THE PANGS OF LOVE.

Chin-cho-ne tak-mok buk go ma t'ān na-puń	Though I tasted not the wild *chin-cho-ne* yam [7])
Kyoń-rūa-le lat dok ā-tim-bu lāt non-ni	I feel great pain in my *kyoń-rūa-le* heart.

---

[824] [231] [415] [222]

[1]) *Po-shor* is a small reedy bamboo, grass which is a favorite fodder for cattle. The largest bamboo from which pitchers are made is „*Po*" or „*Poe*" (*Dendrocalamus Hamiltonii*, NEES & ARNOT). It is often 6 to 8 inches in diameter.

[2]) This beer brewed from the fermented seed of millet (*Eleusine crocana*) is served out in bamboo-pitchers or *poā-t'at*, from which it is sipped up through a thin bamboo tube called *poā-bia*, so called, because it is scraped and polished, from *po*, a bamboo and *bip*, to scrape.

[3]) Literally „Sister".

[4]) The folded bud of a growing shoot, such as the plantain or banana (*Musa sapiens*).

[5]) *Ńal-bli*, a weaving rod.

[6]) *Ian-s'u*.

[7]) *Tak-mok-buk* or „Forest yam". This is a very deeply set wild yam, growing 4 to 6 feet below surface and is only to be dug up with great labour.

11:Hermanns M-5 (1951)1954
AK5 Lepcha AK5

755
782
●416
291

Fig. 21, The cattle sacrifice

11:Hermanns M-5 (1951)1954
AK5 Lepcha AK5

places made of five stones. The third stone in the middle is common to both and is long enough to support a kettle on each of its outer extremities. Since the stones are placed with a view to holding larger kettles little iron tripods with rings are placed between the stones so as to permit the use of little kettles. Wood is used for fuel. About 1 and ½ meter above the fire a bamboo framework shelf is suspended for holding the kitchen utensils, fuel and other articles. The fireplace stretches across the entire width of the house, as it is the chief work-room, dining-room and, at night, the dormitory. In addition to this there are other little rooms shut off by wooden partitions. Some of these have a roof made of bamboo slats. All types of belongings are stored up over this ceiling which can be approached by the help of a tree trunk notched at intervals to serve as stairs. Occasionally one finds an additional partition which serves as an altar on which sacrifices are offered. This is, very likely, a borrowing from Buddhism.

The pig sties are sometimes located under the house, sometimes at the side. Near the house are situated the stables for cattle and goats and the poultry cages, together with other store houses. The entire settlement in some cases is completely enclosed with a bamboo fence.

Individual farmhouses are as a rule all by themselves. But there are also settlements which comprise of two, three or four houses. This kind of dwelling, a kind of building on piles, is characteristic of the Rong, but has its parallels in South-East Asia and South China.

The ancient costume of the Rong consists of two coarse striped widths of cloth which are held in place over the shoulders by means of a clasp, and about the loins with the aid of a cloth girdle. It reaches up to the knees. Both men and women wear trousers which come below the knees. Sometimes the men wear a short shirt, while the women wear a bodice. This was the ancient costume and the material for this was woven by the Lepchas themselves. Today the practice of weaving has almost died out. The Lepchas purchase ready-made materials. In place of the old style the women have taken over the Tibetan style in an ever increasing degree ; the long dress without sleeves (the Tibetan

11:Hermanns M-5 (1951)1954
AK5 Lepcha AK5

142
231
482
412
415
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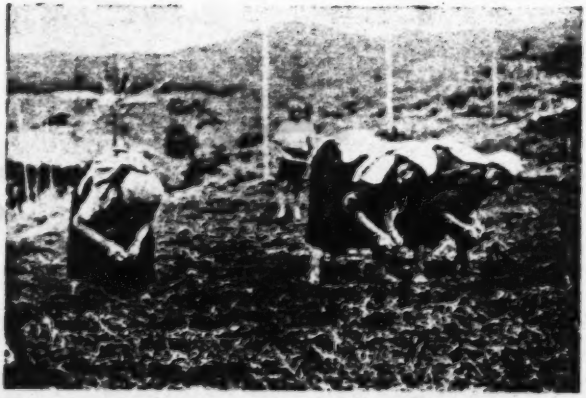
857

25. Lepcha children starting for field work



142
291
243
462

26. Lepcha women planting rice

Fig. 23-24 p. 99

[End Plate 9]

11:Hermanns M-5 (1951)1954
AK5 Lepcha AK5

291
482
445
412
137
313

37. Lepcha grandmother cutting bamboo

142
291
302
137

38. Lepcha children

[End Plate 15]

11:Hermanns M-5 (1951)1954
AK5 Lepcha AK5

291
482
#15
854

41. Lepcha mother carrying her baby

854
142
291

42. The baby in the cradle

[End Plate 17]